Inclusion of more commodities under the list of essential commodities

1225. SHRI PENUMALLI MADHU: Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) whether there is any proposal to include more commodities under the list of essential commodities to invoke 1955 Essential Commodities Act;

(b) whether there is any proposal to include pulses, midha, wheat powder, vanaspathi in the list of essential commodities; and

(c) if so, the detils thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI TASLIMUDDIN): (a) No. Sir. there is no proposal for inclusion of any more commodities in the list of essential commodities under Essential Commodities Act, 1955.

(b) and (c) The item "Foodstuffs, including edible oilseeds and oils" which is an essential commodity at present, includes all the food items including pulses, gur, wheat products (namely maida, rava, suji, atta, resultant atta and bran), vanaspathi etc. Therefore, there is no need to include these commodities separately in the list of essential commodities under the Essential Commodities Act, 1955.

Prices of essential commodities

1226. SHRI RAJKUMAR DHOOT: Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that prices of essential commodities have shot up after the hike in the rates of petrol, diesel and CNG;

(b) whether Government have gone into the impact of hike in petroleum prices on the cost of essential commodities and the actual increase in market prices of these commodities;

(c) whether the market prices have increased much higher than the cost prices and whether Government have invoked the EC Act or the

Prevention of Black-marketing and Maintenance of Supplies of Essential Commodities Act;

(d) if so, the details thereof and the result therefor; and

(e) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI TASLIMUDDIN): (a) During the year 2006, prices of petrol and diesel were increased by Rs.4 and Rs. 2 per litre respectively with effect from 6th June. 2006. However, Government reduced the prices of petrol and diesel by Rs. 2 and Rs. 1 per litre respectively with effect from 30th November, 2006. A further reduction of the same magnitude was made effective from 16th February, 2007. Prices of essential commodities such as wheat and pulses have registered increase mainly due to inadequate domestic supplies relative to demand and rise in international prices

(b) A Statement showing the percentage variations in the movement of Wholesale Price Index in respect of the 14 essential commodities during the period between 3.6.06 (pre-hike) and 17.6.06 (post-hike) is enclosed. *(See* below). It is evident from the Statement that the increase in prices of petrol and diesel have not made any significant impact on the prices of the essential commodities. However, increase in diesel prices generally have a cascading effect, which would contribute to increases in the retail prices of various commodities in different parts of the country.

(c) to (e) In order to check the rising trend of prices of essential commodities, the Central Government has issued a Central Order dated 29.08.2006 for a period of 6 months which has been extended for further six months *vide* notification dated 27.2.2007 to enable the State Governments to invoke Stock Limits in respect of wheat and pulses. By virtue of this Central Order the States/UTs have been empowered to take effective action to bring out the hoarded stock of these items to ensure their availability to the common people at reasonable prices.

The Prevention of Black-marketing and Maintenance of Supplies of Essential Commodities Act, 1980 empowers the Central Government or a

State Government to detain persons whose activities are found to be prejudicial to the maintenance of supplies of commodities essential to the community. As per reports received from the State Governments, 161 persons were ordered for detention under the Act during the period from 1.1.2006 to 31.12.2006.

Statement

Percentage variation in the wholesale price indices of selected Essential Commodities during The period between 3.6.06 (pre-hike) and 17.6.06 (post-hike)

Commodity	Weight	Percentage Variation 17/06/2006 03/06/2006
Rice	2.4	0.3
Wheat	1.4	0.6
Gram	0.2	-0.4
Arhar	0.1	-1.1
Potatoes	0.3	2.1
Onions	0.1	21.8
Milk	4.4	0.5
Tea	0.2	1.6
Atta	0.2	Steady
Sugar	3.6	-0.1
Salt	0.0	Steady
Vanaspati	0.8	Steady
Mustard oil	0.5	-0.1
Groundnut oil	0.2	0.1